

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) A method of dissolving carbon nanotubes comprising  
(i) providing reduced, negatively charged nanotubes with positive counterions by  
reducing carbon nanotubes; and  
(ii) adding a polar organic solvent to the negatively charged nanotubes of step (i),  
resulting in a dissolved phase of negatively charged nanotubes with positive  
counterions in the solvent

~~The method of claim 4~~, wherein the step of providing negatively charged nanotubes comprises adding under anaerobic conditions, a salt of formula:



to the carbon nanotubes, wherein

A<sup>+</sup> represents a cation of an alkali metal ion; and

B<sup>-</sup> represents an anion of a polyaromatic compound,

so as to electrically charge the nanotubes.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 3 or claim 7, wherein the polyaromatic compound is chosen from naphthalene, benzophenone, fluorenone and anthraquinone.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[1]]~~3 or claim 7, wherein the polar organic solvent is sulfolane, dimethyl sulfoxide, dimethylformamide, N-methylpyrrolidone or N-methylformamide.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]]3 or claim 7, wherein the carbon nanotubes contain boron atoms in place of carbon atoms.

7. (Currently Amended) A method of dissolving carbon nanotubes comprising  
(i) providing reduced, negatively charged nanotubes with positive counterions by  
reducing carbon nanotubes; and

(ii) adding a polar organic solvent to the negatively charged nanotubes of step (i),  
resulting in a dissolved phase of negatively charged nanotubes with positive  
counterions in the solvent

~~The method of claim 4~~, wherein the carbon nanotubes are single-walled or  
multi-walled nanotubes.

Claim 8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 3 or claim 7, wherein the carbon nanotubes are hollow nanotubes.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 3 or claim 7, wherein the carbon nanotubes contain molecules, salts, or metal elements inside their hollow interior.

Claim 11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]]3 or claim 7, further comprising a step of functionalizing the surface or the ends of the nanotubes.

Claims 13-16. (Canceled)